

STATE REPRESENTATIVE

Bob Godfrey

DEPUTY SPEAKER

110TH DISTRICT • DANBURY

Capitol News
2005

Working for Danbury

"Danbury is my lifelong hometown. Danbury comes first."

This year I was able to secure more funding for Danbury, and I fought to get state grants for important local initiatives. These funds will improve the quality-of-life for all of us. When it came to funding our state budget, we successfully fought to stop tax increases on the poor and middle class. Despite proposed tax hikes by the Governor on alcohol, cigarettes, and gasoline, I stood strong and said **NO** to this regressive nickel-and-dime approach to raising revenue. Instead, we found a more fair and equitable way to balance the budget by taxing estates in excess of \$2 million.

Below is a chart that shows the funds I have secured for Danbury:

	FY 04-05 Estimated	FY 05-06 Governor's Proposal	FY 05-06 Final Agreement With Legislature
Education Cost Sharing Grant	\$16,280,329	\$16,605,936	\$17,373,813
Payment in Lieu of Taxes: State Owned Real Property	\$1,507,205	\$1,469,131	\$1,577,464
Payment in Lieu of Taxes: Colleges and Hospitals	\$1,307,545	\$1,294,977	\$1,351,445
Mashantucket Pequot and Mohegan Fund Grant	\$1,525,907	\$1,489,532	\$1,489,532
Town Aid Road Fund Grant	\$294,158	\$294,158	\$412,294
Public School Transportation	\$697,444	\$744,224	\$744,224
Non-Public School Transportation	\$178,641	\$213,530	\$213,540
TOTAL STATUTORY FORMULA GRANTS	\$22,418,950	\$22,750,432	\$23,801,246

Difference from FY 05
Difference from Governor

\$1,382,296
\$1,050,814

Bob celebrating Husky
Day at the Capitol
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Bob Godfrey
state representative
110th District



Bob introducing Dan
Spellacy and Brenda Bee
from the CT YMCA Youth
and Government Program in
the House Chamber



Bob addressing fellow
veterans at the Pledge
to the Flag event



Bob speaking to students from
King Street School in a public
hearing room

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CALL ME FOR YOUR FREE COPY OF THIS YEAR'S:
Laws For Seniors • Laws For Children • Education Laws
Environment Laws • Major Public Acts • Laws for Businesses

Hands-Free Cell Phones

The General Assembly passed legislation that restricts cell phone use and bans the use of some other devices while operating a motor vehicle. Beginning October 1, drivers must use hands-free technology, with certain exceptions.

Drivers are permitted to turn a cell phone on and off and dial and answer cell phones manually. While responding to an emergency situation, a driver may use either a hand-held or hands-free cell phone. In addition, drivers may no longer use text messaging devices, pagers, personal digital assistants, video game devices, laptop computers and digital cameras (PA 05-159).

Teenage Drivers

In an effort to reduce motor vehicle accidents involving younger drivers, new restrictions were enacted on 16 and 17 year old drivers. These young drivers:

- Will be banned from driving between 12:01 AM and 5:00 AM. Exceptions to the ban include driving related to school, work, religious activity, or in emergency situations.
- Must complete 20 hours of behind-the-wheel experience necessary to obtain a learner's permit.
- Will be completely banned from using a cell phone when driving unless there is an emergency (PA 05-54).

Pocket Bikes

Pocket bikes, which have been growing in popularity, fall within a gray and uncertain area of the law. Even though they are often only 16 inches tall, they are able to reach speeds of up to 40 miles an hour. The high speed and small structure of pocket bikes create a dangerous situation on our sidewalks and streets.

This past session, I successfully introduced legislation to restrict the use of mini-motorcycles on public roads, sidewalks, and other public property. In addition, the new law provides that anyone offering a mini-motorcycle for sale, lease, or rent must provide warning labels and advisories on the safe and legal use of such vehicles, the limitations on their use, and the possible consequences for violating the limitations (PA 05-173).

Representative Bob Godfrey: Proven Leadership

Education

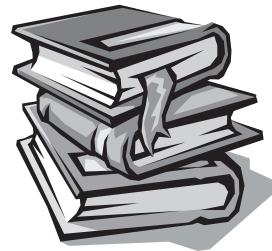
COMMITMENT TO EDUCATION

One of my main objectives as your Representative is to make public education better. This session, **Public Act 05-245** demonstrates this dedication to quality education for all students. Specifically this act:

- ✓ Establishes a state education resource center to encourage innovative education practices;
- ✓ Establishes the Early Childhood Cabinet to coordinate resources across agencies and promote quality among early childhood development and education programs;
- ✓ Increases the School Readiness reimbursement rate in both FY 06 and FY 07;
- ✓ Creates an Interdistrict Magnet School Task Force on funding and operations;
- ✓ Provides for development of a kindergarten assessment tool and establishes a technology pilot program for 9th and 10th graders;
- ✓ Increases the Capitol Scholarship Grant;
- ✓ Creates an adult education initiative competitive program.



Bob with students from Saint Peter's School



I was extremely disappointed when the Governor vetoed the school nutrition bill, as it would have had lasting effects on the health and safety of our children. This landmark legislation was the strongest school nutrition bill in the nation. Putting our school children on the path to healthier lives should remain our top priority.



Medical Malpractice

PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST



My goal has always been to protect the victims, and then to help our doctors. **Public Act 05-275** incorporates an array of solutions to expand access to health care and curtail the rising cost of medical malpractice insurance premiums in Connecticut. Among the provisions in place under this legislation are:

- ✓ Revisions to the Offer of Compromise stage of a trial, in which plaintiffs and defendants review the Good Faith Certificate, a document that must be signed by a physician practicing the same area of medicine, certifying that grounds exist for negligence of care;
- ✓ In order to implement safeguards against out-of-control premium increases, medical malpractice insurers seeking to raise premiums by 7.5% or higher would be required to inform their insured (who are entitled to request a public hearing prior to approval of the increase from the Department of Insurance);
- ✓ In order to strengthen patient safety practices, each hospital and outpatient surgical facility is required to develop accurate identification procedures to be used prior to surgery;
- ✓ Lastly, the legislation introduces continuing education for doctors, who must show a minimum of 50 contract hours of medical education to be completed within 24-months prior to license renewal.



The Deputy Speaker presides

The legislation provides that if, by 2008, reforms included under this package fall short of aims to reduce the frequency and amount of awards and settlements, the Insurance Commissioner shall convene a working group to pursue other alternatives to reduce medical malpractice insurance premiums.

I will NEVER vote to shift the cost of a doctor's mistake to the patient receiving treatment. I am pleased to have co-sponsored this critical legislation.

Environment

KEEPING

DANBURY CLEAN

The Connecticut Clean Car Act Incentive Program

The Connecticut Climate Change Plan of 2005 calls for Connecticut families to invest in vehicles that produce lower greenhouse gas emissions. Under the legislation, government leaders will convene a working group that will submit a plan no later than January 2006 to reduce sales taxes on clean cars, such as the hybrid models. The transportation sector is the largest source of greenhouse gas pollution in the state, contributing more than 40% of the state's total greenhouse gases. This legislation provides significant health and economic benefits to Connecticut families, providing them with a breath of fresh air (**SA 05-6**).



New Clean Air Strategies

This legislation prohibits the installation or operation of outdoor wood-burning furnaces unless they meet a number of exemptions enumerated in the bill. Most importantly, it outlaws the burning of chemically treated wood. Environmental and immediate health concerns related to the release of smoke into the air prompted consideration of this legislation. It is further noted that outdoor furnaces do not include fire pits, wood-fired barbecues, or decorative fireplaces (**PA 05-227**).



A Connecticut Clean Diesel Plan

This year legislators tackled the serious health risks due to the release of diesel pollution into the air our families breathe. Particulate matter in diesel fuels release a toxic mixture of carcinogens and other air toxins that are linked to asthma, heart attack, respiratory disease and premature death. Of most concern to legislators is the toll diesel emissions inflicts on the sensitive organs of Connecticut's children. This legislation creates a committee consisting of commissioners from state agencies, who will develop a plan for reducing diesel emissions from school buses and trucks, as well as measure the estimated costs for implementation (**SA 05-7**).

For more info call me at 800-842-1902 or e-mail me at Bob.Godfrey@cga.ct.gov